

MONTANA UPDATE

Montana Department of Commerce

Volume 16 • Issue 8 • August 2005



Pennsylvania Family Exploring Montana— for Free

For the seventh year in a row, one lucky family has won the vacation of a lifetime through the Montana Kids Vacation Giveaway Promotion on Montanakids.com. Out of more than 25,000 contest entries received from every state in the nation, the Yex family of West Newton, PA, is spending their summer vacation this year in the mountains and rivers of central and north-west Montana—all for free. Thanks to a generous group of sponsors, the Yex's will be busy sunup to sundown. Their adventures will include a stay in Glacier National Park, dinosaur digging, several rafting trips and several days exploring Seeley Lake, Whitefish and Great Falls.

The Montana Promotion Division (MPD) has developed a very successful partnership with Disney's online properties (Disney.com and Family.com) to promote this sweepstakes. This year, MPD also included Yahoo!igans! in its internet advertising initiative. According to Sarah Lawor, Consumer Marketing Manager for MPD, "Yahoo!igans! provides an opportunity to get our sweepstakes in front of a wide audience of children, parents and teachers." Again this year, Disney created a Montana mini-site that included an interactive Montana map and link to our sweepstakes on www.montanakids.com.

Once again, a big thank you to all of our partners in this great promotion! The Yex

family itinerary and a complete list of the sponsors are posted on www.montanakids.com. Look in the coming months on that site for a recap of their exciting time here in Montana.

T-Rex Film is First

The Montana Film Office is ready for increased interest in location filming in the state as a result of the new tax incentive rebates. The Big Sky on the Big Screen Act was recently signed into law by Governor Schweitzer and is now in effect. This incentive for film production in Montana established a 12% rebate based on hired Montana labor and an 8% rebate based on qualified expenditures.

Montana ushered in its first qualified project with British production company Impossible Pictures, who filmed *T-Rex—100 Years of Pictures* in Butte, Glendive, Malta and Virginia City. Butte's period architecture was perfect for the film's historic scenes, even though the city is not the site of the find. *T-Rex* is a tongue-in-cheek celebrity biography of the planet's most famous dinosaur and will air on the Discovery Channel later this year.



Kudos to Missoula and Glacier Country

Missoula, along with the support of Glacier Country and Travel Montana, hosted the Society of American Travel Writers for their freelance council meeting, July 1-5, 2005.

Four days were filled with endless opportunities to explore the area, with the purpose of helping the 27 travel writers garner story ideas. Some of the activities

included biking the Rattlesnake and Hiawatha Trails, birding down the Bitterroot Valley, kicking back at Montana Island Lodge, horseback riding at Lake Upsata, floating the Albion Gorge, hiking the Lolo Trail, photographing the National Bison Range and Arlee Powwow, as well as experiencing all the attractions within Missoula's vibrant community.

Like Missoula proper, the evening receptions were eclectic and vibrant.

Friday's evening soiree took place at the Missoula Children's Theatre with all of Missoula's various film and music festivals represented. The new Hilton Garden Inn flew in their chef as the dinner host. Saturday saw the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation host "elk camp," with a sneak peek at their new digs under construction. The group headed to the Holt Museum in Lolo Sunday for a chuckwagon cookout hosted by Bill and Ramona Holt and Montana State Parks, with a special appearance by Jack Gladstone. A campfire, complete with stories and s'mores, rounded out the beautiful evening. The grand finale, capped off by Southgate Mall's fireworks display, was dinner at the elegant Shadow's Keep, where many of Missoula's distinguished authors joined the travel writers for dinner.

Other regions and properties of the state hosted pre- and post-meeting trips, including Custer, Russell and Yellowstone Countries, Flathead and Whitefish CVBs, Runamuk Guest Ranch, Papoose Creek Lodge and the Range Riders Ranch.

Throughout the meeting, while the recreation was thrilling and the landscapes picturesque, it was the people of Montana that left a stirring impression according to feedback from the writers. Pat yourselves on the back, Missoula!

Made in Montana Display Material Needed

Travel Montana operates a Display Case Program at its Visitor Information Centers (VICs) that is designed as a destination-marketing tool, showcasing promotional and "Made in Montana" or "Montana's Choice" products and services. Participants in the program can include (in priority order):

- "Made in Montana" or "Montana's Choice" producers/businesses
- Tourism Regions
- Convention and Visitors Bureaus
- State and federal land management agencies
- Nonprofit organizations

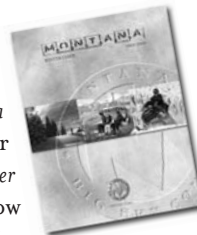
Display case usage is free and the Wibaux VIC is looking for suppliers to help fill its case. If you are interested in showcasing your goods, please contact:

Wibaux VIC
406-796-2253
Email: wibauxvic@midrivers.com

For complete information on Travel Montana's Display Case Program, contact Carol Crockett, 406-841-2796, email: ccrockett@mt.gov.

Winter Guides Available

Is the heat getting to you? Maybe thoughts of snow will help relieve the heat. The new 2005-2006 *Montana Winter Guide* and October 2005-April 2006 *Winter Calendar of Events* are now available. New to the guide is a section featuring snowcoach tours. If you are interested in these guides or any of our other publications, give us a call at 406-841-2870. To



bring the feeling of winter closer to your desk, visit Travel Montana's winter websites: www.wintermt.com, www.skimt.com and www.sledtherockies.com.

Reminder to Businesses!

If you haven't done so already, please return the survey that was mailed to you in early June updating your business information on our website. Returning the survey also ensures that you will receive your free line listing in the upcoming 2006-07 *Vacation Planner*. While the deadline to return the survey is August 1, Travel Montana will still accept your late survey. Make any corrections, sign and return the surveys to: Surveys, Travel Montana, PO Box 200533, Helena, MT 59620-0533 or fax to 406-841-2871.

Alternative accessible formats of this document will be provided to disabled persons on request.

Web Stats		INFORMATION FOR TRAVEL IN BIG SKY COUNTRY		
		MONTANA KIDS	WILDLIFE	LEWIS & CLARK
Web Trends summary of visitor sessions on Montana Promotion Division's primary web sites from January to June. A visitor session is a session of activity (all hits) for one user of a web site.				
	2004	2005	Difference 04 to 05	Percentages
Visitmt	1,611,369	2,396,024	784,655	49%
MT Kids	724,341	737,051	12,710	2%
Winter	480,092	485,264	5,172	1%
Intranet	97,099	151,257	54,158	56%
Lewis & Clark	181,936	207,075	25,139	14%
MT Film	108,233	180,219	71,986	67%
MT Group	51,671	80,725	29,054	56%
MT Meetings	37,065	56,939	19,874	54%

Calendar of Events

August

- 1 Deadline for Montana Vacation Planner surveys
- 13 - 16 Travel Industry Association, Education Seminar for Tourism Organizations, Coeur d'Alene, ID
- 19 *Evelyn Cameron: Photographing Montana* documentary film premier, Terry, MT

September

- 1-5 Popular Photography Mentor Workshop, West Yellowstone, MT
- 5 Labor Day, Office closed

For all of the latest Montana tourism industry information log on to:
travelmontana.mt.gov



Travel Montana • Montana Film Office
Montana Department of Commerce

301 S. Park
PO Box 200533
Helena, MT 59620-0533

STD PRSRT
U.S. Postage
PAID
Helena, MT
Permit No. 20